

Principled Pragmatism: Lessons Learned from the First Intifada

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Elizabeth Agnew". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name of the thesis advisor.

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## Abstract:

For nearly a century the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been constituted by violence. There have, however, been periods of nonviolent action, the most significant being the First Intifada of the late 1980s. The primary intellectual influence behind the Intifada's nonviolent movement was Palestinian Christian Mubarak Awad, sometimes referred to as "the Gandhi of Palestine". This title is not without merit. In many ways, Awad resembles Gandhi in his personal nonviolent philosophy. However, in both his actions and writings during the Intifada, Awad adopted a pragmatic approach to nonviolence, more reminiscent of pragmatic nonviolence scholar Gene Sharp than principled nonviolence leader Mahatma Gandhi. In this paper, I argue that Awad's synthesis of Gandhi and Sharp's brands of nonviolence, first, demonstrates that principled and pragmatic approaches can be compatible in the field of nonviolent struggle, and second, that contextual factors in the Occupied Territories may require a synthesis like Awad's in order for nonviolence to work in Palestine.

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*"Noncooperation and civil disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called Satyagraha. Satyagraha is the search for Truth; and God is Truth. Ahimsa or nonviolence is the light that reveals the Truth to me... Let us all strive to be perfect Satyagrahis. The striving does not require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For Satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in every one of us. Let us know it."*

Mahatma Gandhi

*"Whatever the issue and scale of the conflict, nonviolent action is a technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential, can wage their conflict without violence. Nonviolent action is not an attempt to avoid conflict. It is one response to the problem of how to wield power effectively."*

Gene Sharp

*"It is my hope that if nonviolence works, this idea would not only be a strategy with the Palestinians against the Israelis, it will move inside the Palestinians so that a teacher would not hit a student, or a parent would not hit a child. The idea would be to use this training as part of our community, as part of our daily life to be nonviolent. But this will take time."*

Mubarak Awad

## Introduction:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains one of the most complicated and bloody disputes of the past century. In western media, the Palestinian struggle has become synonymous with rockets and suicide bombers. However, seldom reported are the attempts by Palestinians to resist Israeli occupation nonviolently. These unsuccessful attempts are not due to the lack of power that can be wielded with nonviolence, but are caused by a lack of consensus among Palestinians about what constitutes nonviolence. This is especially true of the First Intifada, the first organized Palestinian nonviolent movement.

One of the most interesting and unfortunate aspects of the First Intifada is the conflicting nature of two of its cardinal features: the intellectual leadership's dedication to nonviolence and the use of limited violence, specifically stone-throwing.

In 2010, NY Times journalist Nicholas Kristof observed a nonviolent Palestinian rally, during which a group of youths began to throw stones at Israeli soldiers. Such scenes have been repeated many times during the course of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Most of the marchers were Palestinians, but some were also Israeli Jews and foreigners who support the Palestinian cause. They chanted slogans and waved placards as photographers snapped photos. At first the mood was festive and peaceful, and you could glimpse the potential of this approach. But then a group of Palestinian youths began to throw rocks at Israeli troops. That's the biggest challenge: many Palestinians define "nonviolence" to include stonethrowing. Soon after, the Israeli forces fired volleys of tear gas at us, and then charged. The protesters fled, some throwing rocks backward as they ran. It's a far cry from the heroism of Gandhi's followers, who refused even to raise their arms to ward off blows as they were clubbed (Kristof, 2010).

Among most scholars of nonviolence, there is little to no debate about the validity of stone-throwing; it is an act of violence. And even if throwing a stone is not intended



as an act of violence, it will almost always be perceived as such by those on the receiving end, rendering it an ineffective nonviolent tactic. I am not interested in disputing this conclusion. Rather I am interested in rhetoric that many Palestinians have used to justify, and alternately to criticize, stone-throwing.

In 2012, sociologist Matthew P. Eddy published a study titled “When Your Gandhi is Not My Gandhi: Memory Templates and Limited Violence in the Palestinian Human Rights Movement” which explores the way principled activists (those who believe violence is intrinsically wrong) and pragmatic activists (those who adopt nonviolence as a resistance tactic) strategically used Gandhian texts to defend their stances on stone-throwing. Overwhelmingly Eddy found that pragmatic activists “tended to justify stone-throwing”, while principled activists saw it as violent and degrading to the message of nonviolence. But what I found most interesting about Eddy’s series of interviews was that both principled and pragmatic activists felt the need to go beyond the principled nonviolence teachings of Gandhi to apply a form of nonviolence that contextually suits Palestine. As Palestinian nonviolent activist Ali Abu Awwad told Eddy, “We read Gandhi, but you know what? We don’t need to study him anymore. We need to study ourselves” (Awwad, Eddy, 204).

Such compelling rhetoric raises the question, what would this adapted nonviolent approach look like? The intellectuals behind the First Intifada struggled to find out. What resulted was a synthesis of principled and pragmatic nonviolence. This synthesis was influenced largely by Christian Palestinian Mubarak Awad through his appropriation of principled activist Mahatma Gandhi and pragmatic scholar Gene Sharp. It is the combination of these two thinkers by Awad, in what I call principled pragmatism, that I

will explore in this paper. I will argue that Awad's hybrid philosophy is evidence that principled and pragmatic forms of nonviolence can successfully be integrated, and may be just what Palestine needs to achieve political sovereignty and social status equal to that of Israelis.

Through this exploration, I will discuss the nonviolent philosophies of Gandhi and Sharp and isolate their key characteristics from texts representative of their larger body of work. For Gandhi, I will analyze his 1920 text "The Doctrine of the Sword". For Sharp I will use his 1989 essay "The Intifadah and Nonviolent Struggle" and reference his three-volume work The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Finally I will discuss Awad's amalgamation of the two approaches.

In examining their writings, it emerges that all three nonviolent activists opposed limited violence, such as stone-throwing, as a legitimate expression of nonviolence, although each thinker reached his conclusion from a different theoretical starting point. Gandhi found stone-throwing to be incompatible with his principled philosophy because it demonstrated stone-throwers' inability to love and forgive their opponents. Gene Sharp condemned stone-throwing in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because it proved to be detrimental to the political goals of the Palestinians. Awad, having the benefit of reading both Gandhi and Sharp, based his opposition to stone-throwing on principled *and* pragmatic concerns

This topic is relevant today given the negative effect of practices like stone-throwing. Stone-throwing not only obscured the Palestinians' nonviolent message but also led to more overt forms of violence like the use of Molotov cocktails. The lesson Palestinians must learn is that if they are going to adapt Gandhi's nonviolent formula, it

must be adapted carefully and with much thought. Given present attempts by Palestinians to return to nonviolent forms of resisting Israeli occupation, I fully believe that now is the time to re-think what can effectively constitute nonviolence for Palestine.

Before discussing the debate surrounding principled and pragmatic uses of nonviolence, it would be worthwhile to first explore two significant contextual dimensions of this discussion. The first of these involves the historical developments on the contested land, dating back to 1200 BCE (i.e. the first record historians have of Jewish habitation in Israel). The contextual focus will be on developments of the 20th c. with the rise of the Zionist movement, a secular group driven by European persecution to establish a Jewish state. Second, I will provide context on the First Intifada and the use of stone-throwing as a nonviolent tactic.

### History of Land Claims

To speak of Palestinian nonviolent resistance in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century uprising known as the First Intifada, it is first necessary to provide some historical context for the conflict in which Palestinians are engaged. Contrary to popular belief, the dispute between Israelis and Palestinians is merely a century old and is not fundamentally based on religious difference. As the origin and development of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could constitute an essay of its own, I will attempt to give a very rudimentary overview of the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as the First Intifada. To do so, it is important to start with Jewish heritage in Israel.

It is difficult to establish just when Jews arrived in Israel, but we have evidence of their habitation in the area from Egyptian records dated at approximately 1200 BCE.

Diasporas, or dispersions of the Jewish people, were largely the result of constant subjugation by the myriad rulers that conquered the area, broadly speaking from the time of the Assyrians (722 BCE) to the Ottoman Empire (which lasted from the 16<sup>th</sup> c.-1920). The result: Jewish population in Israel (which was renamed Palestine by Roman conquerors) had dwindled from as many as 1,000,000 in 70 CE to nearly 25,000 by the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

At this time, European countries began offering their Jewish citizenry emancipation, or social equality with Gentiles, and encouraged their assimilation. However, Jews continued to face severe discrimination, sometimes fatal, as in the case of Russian pogroms. Such persecution caused many Jewish communities to lose faith in the ability of disinterested European governments to protect them. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Zionist movement emerged. The Zionists were secular Jews who though “disenchanted with their religious culture” nevertheless rejected “the idea of assimilation into European society where hostility toward Jews persisted” (Smith, 26). As a solution to their persecution, Zionists began searching for the means of creating a secular Jewish state that would bring them out from underneath Gentile power. Though not originally interested in Palestine, the Zionist leadership was strongly motivated by the financial involvement of religious Jews who desired a return to Palestine, the Jewish homeland. In addition, many secular Zionists maintain a sense of Jewish ethnic identity and were thus sensitive to the history of Palestine as the land of the Jews. To this end, the World Zionist Organization, founded in 1897, began the purchase of large amounts of farmland in Palestine using the financial contributions of Jews worldwide.



The Zionist leadership was not initially concerned with the native Arab residents, assuming legal purchase of the land would encourage voluntary immigration to surrounding countries (Smith, 31). However, the Arab population immediately became worried and attempts to restrict the sale of land to the Zionists began in 1897, the very year the World Zionist Organization was formed (Smith, 36). World War I brought European imperial interests to the Middle East and, with it, political advantages for the Zionists. Relative to the Palestinians, Zionists had easy access to the British who held control of the Ottoman territory at this time. This was largely thanks to prominent Zionist leader (and first President of Israel) Chaim Weizmann. Born in Russia and educated in Geneva, Weizmann moved from Switzerland to England in 1908 where he “established ties with important personalities within the British government” that enabled effective Zionist “lobbying efforts for British sponsorship of a Jewish State in Palestine” (Smith, 67-8). The organization was able to win British endorsement by agreeing to support British interests in the area, while citing the need for British “redress” for its part in Europe’s persecution of the Jews (Smith, 86). The formal declaration of this endorsement came in the form of the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917:

His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country. (Smith, 71)

While the Balfour Declaration included concern for the “civil and religious rights” of the Arab majority, it purposefully left out any mention of political rights. This ensured that “political rights would be reserved for the prospective Jewish community once it attained a majority” but it also withheld legal power from the Arab population (Smith,

72). In effect, the Balfour Declaration gave Zionists full British support to take power in Palestine.

However, after World War II, the British Empire no longer had the resources or motivation to support the Zionists and handed the conflict over to the United Nations in 1947 (Smith, 193). On November 29 of that year the UN passed a partition plan that allowed Zionists to establish Israel as a Jewish State on May 14, 1948. Violence erupted and, between May and July, Israel captured more lands and expelled 400,000-450,000 of the 860,000 Arabs remaining in the territory of Israel. These wars marked the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the half century since, the land designated as Palestinian land has shrunk by 80% as Israel has increased its territory both through steady occupation (Smith, 203).

Throughout the conflict that continues on to our present day, *both* sides have committed atrocious acts of violence and have violated human rights. Despite international intervention, peaceful resolution remains elusive. There have, however, been moments in history when peace seemed possible. The First Intifada was one such moment.

### The First Intifada, 1987-1993

Following a period of reduced Israeli settlement of Palestinian Territories (Gaza and the West Bank) in the 1980's, tensions flared when the Israeli government redoubled expansionist settlements. Often during this time, Israeli military "authorities would simply fence off Arab land and declare it to be Jewish property, leaving the owners with no legal recourse" (Smith, 401). On December 8, 1987, an Israeli military



vehicle “crashed into several Arab cars in Gaza, killing four Palestinians”, and sparked the uprising that became known as the First Palestinian Intifada (Smith, 399).

The First Intifada was a largely nonviolent Palestinian movement in the late 1980s to protest the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It stemmed from “widespread dissatisfaction with Israeli rule” over the territories, and the realization that the Palestinian plight was largely ignored by global leaders, international organizations, and fellow Arab nations (Pal, 181). Activists, who consisted mostly of the younger and poorer segments of society, called for the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state led by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to exist alongside Israel (Smith, 406). Though in its origins it seemed a spontaneous and disorganized rebellion, activists quickly coalesced under the command of an organization called the Unified National Leadership, a board of local committee heads that issued tactical pamphlets throughout the territories (Smith 406). Early on the PLO became weary of the UNL’s popularity, fearing their growing power. Though it was not in favor of the UNL’s nonviolent agenda, the PLO eventually collaborated with the UNL in order to maintain influence over the Intifada (Pal, 181). According to German-Indian author and journal editor of *The Progressive* Amitabh Pal, “the bulk of the resistance was nonviolent, consisting primarily of peaceful demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, tax refusal, occupations, blockades, and the creation of alternative institutions. A combination of Israeli repression and [internal] factionalism within the resistance led to increased violence in the latter part of the six-year uprising, yet virtually no firearms were used by the Palestinian resistance, and it remained a primarily nonviolent movement” (Pal, 188).

The tactical pamphlets distributed by the UNL drew heavily from the materials previously circulated by Mubarak Awad. Awad, born in 1943, is a Christian Mennonite Palestinian intellectual and founder of the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence in 1985. He is sometimes referred to as the “Gandhi of Palestine” for his role in spearheading the Intifada’s nonviolent strategy. Awad was introduced to the message of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. while studying at Lee College in Tennessee in 1959 and Bluffton College in Ohio in the 1969. Awad is too young to have interacted directly with Gandhi, nor does he indicate in his published writings that he interacted with Martin Luther King Jr. Gene Sharp is the only mentor whom Awad met. Sharp was aware of the developments in Palestine during the early 1980’s. In 1989, Sharp accompanied a group of Western nonviolence advocates invited by Awad to meet with PLO leadership in Tunis (Dedouet, 227). The two have subsequently collaborated in interviews and public education events on the use of nonviolence in Palestine since the First Intifada.

To further the Palestinian cause, Awad needed to evoke Israeli and international sympathy and he believed that this could only be done through nonviolence. To this end, he attempted to spread the message of Gandhi’s principled nonviolence to the Palestinians. He drove around the territories talking about Gandhi and nonviolence. He traveled to India in 1984 to translate into Arabic a biography on Ghaffar Khan (1890-1988); the Muslim, nonviolent Indian independence leader, and he distributed it across Palestine. In 1984, he published the article *Non-Violent Resistance: A Strategy for the Occupied Territories* in which he argued the importance of nonviolence as a strategy for Palestine and detailed a number of tactics as described by Gene Sharp. During the first

year of the Intifada, Awad helped lead protests and peaceful occupations of Israeli settlements. He was arrested and deported by the Israeli government in 1988, making him even more of an icon to Palestinian activists. Awad and his publications played an important role in the implementation of nonviolence in the Intifada.

While the nonviolent resistance of the First Intifada was largely successful in its origins, its nonviolent commitment degenerated in the mid-1990s due to a number of factors. Perhaps the most influential of these were the release of conflicting tactical instructions, the increased repression attempts by the Israeli military, and the lack of educational resources at the disposal of the UNL and the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence. These three factors hindered the full implementation of principled nonviolence and contributed to the use of limited violence such as stone-throwing.

Stone-throwing was used by Palestinians in the First Intifada for a number of reasons. I will address three of these here. First, stone-throwing had cultural and symbolic roots in the Palestinian community. References were made to David and Goliath and the stone became a powerful cultural symbol of resistance in the face of overwhelming Israeli power. Most Palestinians did not consider stone-throwing an act of violence when they “faced machine guns, and [they] contended that if they did want to cause death and injury, they would have used far more lethal weapons” (Pal, 190). Second, conflicting tactical directions to use stone-throwing and Molotov cocktails were released by the PLO and other violent or pragmatic nonviolence proponents. This form of stone-throwing was done most often by young boys to demoralize and provoke Israeli troops into using excessive force. Finally, many activists who approved of the second form of stone-throwing, specifically stone-throwing on pragmatic nonviolent grounds,

cited Gandhi's texts to justify the practice. This kind of appropriation of his texts highlights the difference between "principled" and "pragmatic" advocates of nonviolence. This difference is worthy of exploring further, and remains at the heart of the debate among nonviolent Palestinian activists today. I will discuss the writings of two scholars who speak directly to this topic: sociologist Mathew P. Eddy and peace studies and nonviolent activism scholar Thomas Weber.

### Are Principled and Pragmatic Nonviolence Incompatible?

In a 1968 essay entitled "Nonviolence is Two", scholar Judith Stiehm was one of the first to "set out most clearly" the difference between principled and pragmatic forms of nonviolence (Weber, 250). Stiehm called these forms of nonviolence the "conscientious" and the "pragmatic". The first is "based on human harmony and a moral rejection of violence and coercion" whereas the second "sees conflict as normal and the rejection of violence as an effective way of challenging power" (Weber, 250). She argues that the two "are different in their motivation, their assumptions, and their implications" possibly rendering them "in some ways incompatible" (Weber, 251).

Peace studies and nonviolent activism scholar Thomas Weber explores the question whether principled and pragmatic nonviolence are incompatible in his essay "Nonviolence is Who: Gandhi and Sharp". In this piece, he follows Gene Sharp's evolution from a Gandhian-inspired principled nonviolence advocate to one who secularized and then wholly abandoned Gandhi for a realist and pragmatic vision of nonviolence. While Weber is ultimately unable to definitively give an answer to the incompatibility question, his thoughts are valuable for the purpose of this discussion.



According to Weber, principled nonviolence is the adoption of nonviolence from a view that violence is inherently immoral. During a conflict, such principled activists are “concerned with reestablishing communication, and through self-suffering, if necessary... to convince the opponent of the error of their ways [through] converting rather than coercing them. They view the opponent as a potential partner in the struggle to satisfy the needs of all” (Weber, 258). On the other hand, pragmatic nonviolence is the adoption of nonviolence solely for its strategic efficacy. Pragmatic activists see conflict “as a relationship between antagonists with incompatible interests. Nonviolence is not there to resolve the conflict or eliminate the conflict but as a way of conducting conflict” (Weber, 257).

Though in practice the two are often indistinguishable; differences can become tangible. According to sociologist Matthew P. Eddy, principled adherents may “lack the sufficient militancy and strategic savvy” necessary to run a successful movement. “Conversely, pragmatic adherents are charged with being incapable of putting the real power and virtues of nonviolence into practice because they do not fully buy into the morality of nonviolence and may condone violence in some situations” (Eddy, 188). Eddy goes on to claim that “the two camps decisively part in the insistence of principled adherents that means and ends cannot be separated, self-suffering must be accepted (rather than inflicting suffering on opponents) and hatred overcome” (Eddy, 188). On the other hand, pragmatic activists are interested in tactics that will result in the attainment of their political goals even if they involve the coercion of their opponents. In this essay, Eddy applies the title principled pacifist to Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., though he notes King’s slightly pragmatic deviation from Gandhi’s insistence on truth

telling. Given the effects of geographical contexts, King felt “he could justify evasiveness in the context of a courtroom in the white supremacist south” (Eddy, 199).

From Mubarak Awad’s publications and interviews, I have noticed two principle sources of influence, each representing two very divergent forms of nonviolence. These sources were Mahatma Gandhi, principled nonviolence leader, and Gene Sharp, pragmatic scholar of nonviolent struggle. In the following sections, I will explore the ways Awad utilized the texts of both men in his work in Palestine. In doing so I hope to demonstrate that principled and pragmatic forms of nonviolence can be compatible, Eddy’s assessment of “two camps” notwithstanding.

I will isolate key characteristics from Gandhi and Sharp’s texts and compare them to the features of Awad’s writings and interviews. For the purposes of this discussion, what is important to understand is the fundamental values and claims at the heart of these men’s nonviolent philosophies. These can arguably be accessed in one or two representative texts. For Gandhi’s philosophy, I will explore his piece “The Doctrine of the Sword”. For Sharp’s philosophy, I will discuss his essay “The Intifada and Nonviolent Struggle” and reference his three-volume work The Politics of Nonviolent Struggle. To supplement these texts I will use Thomas Weber’s piece “Nonviolence is Who? Gene Sharp and Gandhi”.

### Gandhi on Nonviolence

Gandhi’s writings were vast and covered many topics. At times, contradictions arose and for that reason it is sometimes difficult to pinpoint exactly what his position would have been on many actions or issues. According to sociologist Matthew P. Eddy,



this is why it is important to focus on the overarching themes, values, and “spirit” of Gandhi’s texts. Gandhi’s “The Doctrine of the Sword” is a text that arguably laid the foundation for his later writings. It was published on August 11, 1920, on the eve of inaugurating his 27-year nonviolent resistance movement in India. In it he set down his philosophy for the coming movement. For the purposes of this discussion, I have isolated four key characteristics of Gandhi’s nonviolent philosophy: a spiritual foundation, a perceived divinity in all human beings, conversion through moral influence, and the maintenance of equally pure means and ends.

The title of the paper refers to what Gandhi perceives to be a pervasive belief in “the final supremacy of brute force” or the necessity of violence in settling conflicts (Gandhi, 87). This is strikingly contrasted with Gandhi’s “religion of nonviolence” or principled spirituality (Gandhi later coins the term *Satyagraha*, often translated as soul-force or truth-force, to refer to his spirituality). What he presents here is not merely a protest tactic, but a way of life to replace the doctrine of the sword; for just as the philosophy of that doctrine is infused in our mentalities and actions, so too does Gandhi’s spiritual nonviolence permeate the entire lives of those who follow it.

It is clear that Gandhi’s philosophy has a religious and otherworldly foundation. Indeed, he claims that one cannot be a principled pacifist without spirituality: “the dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law- to the strength of the spirit” (Gandhi, 88). Such discipline and strength is a major facet of Gandhi’s philosophy, a fact he explicitly states in this writing:

Nonviolence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil doer, but it means the putting of one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant... And so I am not pleading for

India to practice nonviolence because she is weak. I want her to practice nonviolence being conscious of her strength and power. (Gandhi, 88)

To follow Gandhi's *Satyagraha* is not easy. It requires suffering, self-sacrifice, and the adoption of hard principles, perhaps the most important of which is forgiveness:

I believe that nonviolence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns the soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is power to punish: it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her... But I do not believe India to be a helpless creature... Let me not be misunderstood. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will. An average Zulu is any way more than a match for an average Englishman in bodily capacity. But he flees from an English boy, because he fears the boy's revolver or those who will use it for him... We in India may in a moment realize that 100,000 Englishmen need not frighten 300 million human beings. A definite forgiveness would therefore mean a definite recognition of our strength. With enlightened forgiveness must come a mighty wave of strength in us. (Gandhi, 87-8)

Such forgiveness requires abandonment of the very idea of enemy or coercion.

By advising forgiveness, Gandhi is leaving behind a conflict of "us" versus "them" for a struggle that recognizes the opponents as fellow, divinely-infused human beings. This struggle involves an attempt to communicate with and convert the adversary through moral influence, rather than coercion. These were Gandhi's goals, and his tactics reflected their sincerity.

It is important to note Gandhi's commitment to his principles throughout his nonviolent campaign, a commitment that was not explicitly set forth in "The Doctrine of the Sword". Gandhi worked hard to ensure that his means were as pure as his ends and that his message was not tarnished by the use of violence. Perhaps the best example of this commitment was in the suspension of his two-year noncooperation movement following an incident of violence and rioting on February 5, 1922. Gandhi called for the public to cease all resistance activities and participate in a five-day fast as penance for

the death and destruction that had resulted from the movement (Tidrick, 176-180). Such was Gandhi's commitment to maintaining the purity of his means as well as his ends.

However, being a "practical idealist", Gandhi understood that not everyone could live up to the principled motives characteristic of his nonviolent spirituality. He also knew the involvement of non-principled activists was necessary for the movement's success:

Being a practical man, I do not wait till India recognizes the capability of the spiritual life in the political world. India considers herself to be powerless and paralyzed before the machine guns, the tanks, and the airplanes of the English. And she takes up noncooperation out of her weakness. It must still serve the same purpose, namely bring her delivery from the crushing weight of British injustice if a sufficient number of people practice it. (Gandhi, 88)

Gandhi is talking about pragmatic activism here, the adoption of the tactics of nonviolence but not of Gandhi's principled "religion of nonviolence". Too often this quote is interpreted to mean that Gandhi was in favor of pragmatic activism. A more nuanced reading shows that Gandhi understood the inevitability of pragmatic activism's existence, but believed it to be inferior to the practice of nonviolence that arises from *Satyagraha*. Pragmatic nonviolence was not the only alternative method Gandhi acknowledged. In this writing, Gandhi creates a spectrum of actions that can be used to resist oppression:

I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence I would advise violence. Thus when my eldest son asked me what he should have done, had he been present when I was almost fatally assaulted in 1908, whether he should have run away and seen me killed or whether he should have used his physical force... I told him it was his duty to defend me even by using violence. Hence it was that I took part in the Boer War, the so-called Zulu Rebellion, and the late war. Hence also do I advocate training in arms for those who believe in the method of violence. I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honor than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonor. (Gandhi, 87)

Once again, many flatly interpret this to mean that Gandhi would have supported acts of violence. Within the First Intifada, activists cited it to advocate for the inclusion of limited violence, such as stone-throwing, within the nonviolent movement. While Gandhi allows that violence is better than doing nothing out of cowardice, he maintains that it is still not as good as acting nonviolently with courage. Indeed, the purpose of this quote is to demonstrate Gandhi's utter disgust of cowardice, not to disown nonviolence. Again, a more nuanced reading of these quotes presents a spectrum in which principled nonviolence is the most ideal option, followed by pragmatic nonviolence, violence, and the least ideal option, cowardly inaction.

According to Eddy, there are "at least three instances" in which Gandhi had "categorized cases of violent resistance in the face of impossible odds as nonviolent apparently because the violence is largely symbolic", a category many Palestinians would argue includes stone-throwing. But as Eddy notes, it is problematic to appoint more significance to "three instances of tangential support" than to the explicit themes of loving and forgiving nonviolence present in "a corpus of 98 volumes, each about 500 pages long" (Eddy, 189). Gandhi would and did condemn overt and limited forms of violence, which, arguably, is how Palestinian stone-throwing is being used in actuality.

This is a very brief overview of Gandhi's approach to principled nonviolence. On the other end of the nonviolent spectrum lies the pragmatic nonviolence of scholar Gene Sharp. His writings offer a mirror image of the four Gandhian characteristics outlined above: a spiritual foundation, a perceived divinity in all human beings, conversion through moral influence, and the maintenance of equally pure means and ends. This



comparison will help clarify Mubarak Awad's use of the two approaches to nonviolence: one reflecting his ideal philosophy, the other his active philosophy.

### Gene Sharp: The Machiavelli of Nonviolence

Gene Sharp, born in 1928, is an internationally recognized American scholar on nonviolent political struggle. If Gandhi represents principled nonviolence, one could argue that Gene Sharp is a contemporary representative of pragmatic nonviolence; one who champions a "technique" rather than "spiritual" approach to nonviolence (Weber, 250). (This is not to say that Gandhi was unconcerned with the tactical benefits of nonviolence, however, his "reasons for [nonviolence] had more to do with a perceived intrinsic rather than merely an instrumental value in nonviolence" (Weber, 252)). Sharp did not start out as a pragmatic nonviolence advocate. Interestingly, his earlier work was characterized by principled idealism.

In his youth, Sharp immersed himself in Gandhian studies. At the age of 25, he finished his first book, Gandhi Wields the Weapon of Moral Power in which he demonstrates his conviction for the Gandhian characteristics isolated in the previous section, such as the need for spiritual adoption of nonviolence:

We must become integrated, loving individuals. Unless people can sense in our lives that of which we speak, it is useless for us to talk of a new way of life. It is important to see Gandhi's method of fighting evil in the perspective of Gandhi's whole philosophy, for this weapon is an expression of a way of looking at life and a way of living. (Sharp, Weber, 253)

His description of *Satyagraha* seems to demonstrate his agreement in the value of all human kind and the power of conversion through moral influence:

The satyagrahi, a believer in satyagraha, constantly seeks to live a life of truth and love. He always seeks to 'turn the searchlight inward' and to so live that he

does no wrong to his fellow men through exploitation, oppression, violence, or other means. The satyagrahi looks upon all as his brothers. He believes that the practice of love and self-suffering will bring about a change of heart in his opponent. He believes that the power of love, if pure, is great enough to melt the stoniest heart of an evildoer. (Sharp, Weber, 253-4)

Sharp even upheld Gandhi's insistence on the purity of means and ends:

...Means and ends should be equally pure. The end growing out of the means is just as logical as the tree growing from the seed... What is attained by love is retained for all time, while what is obtained by violence has within it the seeds of its own destruction. (Sharp, Weber, 253)

However, Sharp's later work became divorced from Gandhi as he adopted more "hard-bitten realist" and pragmatic directions. One of his first steps in this transition was to abandon Gandhi's emphasis on spirituality.

In an article published in 1965, Sharp expressed concern that Gandhi's religious language "more often confuses than clarifies" the political importance of nonviolence to Western audiences (Sharp, Weber, 256). He attempted to make Gandhi's message more "palatable through a process of secularization" and ended up "reevaluating Gandhi in his own terms" (Weber, 257). This in itself was not enough for Sharp, and as he became more focused on "discovering a nonviolent alternative to war, one that is realistic and pragmatic", he abandoned Gandhi wholly after his principled philosophy had "become a hindrance rather than an asset in this task" (Weber, 257).

In 1973, Sharp published his "near definitive" work, The Politics of Nonviolent Action. This three volume book speaks of nonviolence in strictly pragmatic terms, and can be read as a practical "how to" guide to nonviolence. In it Sharp discusses "the notion of power, gives historical examples of nonviolent struggle, catalogues 198 different methods of nonviolent action, and examines the dynamics of nonviolent action, including action against violent and repressive opponents" (Weber, 257). The book



omits any mention of Gandhian principles, and focuses on power within the context of struggle rather than the development of spiritual and moral strength:

Nonviolent action is a technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential, can wage their conflict without violence. Nonviolent action is not an attempt to avoid or ignore conflict. It is one response to the problem, of how to act effectively in politics, especially how to wield power effectively. (Sharp, Weber, 258)

In his 1989 essay, "The Intifada and Nonviolent Struggle", Sharp explicitly downplays the value of conversion through moral influence in favor of tactics of outright coercion:

Success sometimes has come through changing the minds and attitudes of the opponents, but that is rare. More often, partial success has been achieved through accommodation (gaining some objectives and giving up others), as in most labor strikes. Nonviolent struggle has also demonstrated its capacity to produce nonviolent coercion of the opponent so that no alternative remains but to capitulate. At times, the opponent's regime has even disintegrated in [the] face of massive repudiation and paralyzing noncooperation. (Sharp, 4)

Non-cooperative coercion was a factor of Gandhi's movement. However, this approach, as presented by Sharp, seems to suggest a full return to an "us" versus "them" approach to struggle that Gandhi worked so hard to leave behind by advocating the value of humankind. There is no such teaching in Sharp's writings, only a one-sided instruction on how to nonviolently defeat one's opponents. Consequently, this mentality has tangible effects on his tactical instruction.

On the question of means and ends, Gene Sharp is again decidedly pragmatic. Rather than focusing on furthering conversion, Sharp "moved to champion a different form of reasoning, one that starts with determining the most practical course of action that enables one to reach the desired goals in the long run" (Weber, 255). He suggests that when searching for resistance tactics the only requirement is that the tactic lead to

the attainment of the movement's political goals. For him the question to be asked is not "is this violent, or nonviolent... is it morally right or morally wrong... justified or unjustified... [rather] the question is, what are the consequences" (Sharp, Weber, 256). Of course this quote was written in the context strictly of *nonviolent* action, and so does not allow room for tactics as heinous as genocide just because the consequence was immediate success for the movement. However, this approach does leave room for pragmatic tactics that would have horrified Gandhi, such as tactically effective acts of limited violence.

In light of his allowance for limited violence on tactical grounds, one thing Sharp makes very clear in his article written at the beginning of the First Intifada is that stone-throwing in the context of the First Intifada is *not* tactically effective:

The 15% or so of the uprising that is constituted by low-level violence involves chiefly stonethrowing. It is necessary to state that stones are not merely symbolic as most Palestinians intend- or explain- them to be; rocks of significant size are also thrown, and petrol bombs have been used against- and have killed- Israelis. Stonethrowing is also almost guaranteed to produce high Palestinian casualties- as indeed it has. I have found it extremely difficult to find a Palestinian justification of this heavy price in terms of *the instrumental effectiveness of that form of action*. My perception is that even as very low-level dangers to Israeli troops, the stones and petrol bombs are counterproductive to achieving [Palestinian] objectives. (Sharp, 7)

It is worth noting that here Sharp and Gandhi would have been in agreement, although the two men used different reasoning to arrive at the same conclusion. Gandhi would have opposed stone-throwing on principled grounds primarily for its expressions of anger toward a fellow human being, whereas Sharp addresses it solely as a flawed strategy in public relations:

The Israelis can almost never see a stone thrown at them as a relatively nonviolent expression of rage and a cry for justice. The stones are instead seen as more threats to the lives of the Jews, calling up memories of past

persecutions, pogroms, and the Holocaust... These perceptions block the message that Palestinians want the Israelis to hear, help arouse support among Israelis for harsh repression, and promote greater willingness among the soldiers to carry out (or exceed) orders to beat or shoot. (Sharp, 7)

Still, while this is a prime example of the fundamental differences between principled and pragmatic nonviolence, it does demonstrate how both can, in fact, come to the same conclusion. In this case, the conclusion is that stone-throwing should stop:

It is the relative nonviolence of the Palestinians that has been most effective in achieving the gains already made... the Palestinians would be even more effective if they replaced the use of the stones and petrol bombs- as well as deliberate killings- with challenging types of nonviolent action. (Sharp, 8)

However, it is a complicated similarity dependent on external context not on shared internal conviction and if Sharp could be said to have retained a connection to Gandhi, it is ambiguous at best. "Depending on how one looks at it," according to Thomas Weber, "Sharp either has gone beyond Gandhi, making nonviolence a more practically available method of struggle, or has ditched key elements of Gandhi's philosophy in action in a way that diminishes nonviolence" (Weber, 252).

As divided as they are, Gandhi and Sharp come together in the formation of Mubarak Awad's own approach to nonviolent resistance. In the following section I argue that Awad's work demonstrates a synthesis of Gandhi's principled standards and Sharp's immediate functionality. Through Awad, we see how principled standards can facilitate a pragmatic strategy in moving toward an assessment that rejects violence.

### Mubarak Awad on Nonviolence: the Gandhi of Palestine?

During and after his work in the Intifada, Awad was compared to Gandhi, even called the "Gandhi of Palestine". According to Awad, this reference is not accurate:

When a lot of reporters and even Palestinians started giving me this title, well, I felt uneasy. I am not Gandhi, I am Mubarak. Gandhi was a different man; his spirituality was different. He was a greater man than me, and I am not in his league... I am in his footsteps, but not in his league. (Awad, Ingram, 44)

Mubarak Awad, born in 1943, was one of the principle intellectual inspirations for the Intifada. In the early 1980s, Awad wrote and distributed newsletters arguing “for the Palestinians to use nonviolence to resist the occupation” (Pal, 183). These newsletters drew heavily from the ideas of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. In addition to this, Awad “drove through the West Bank countryside, parking at the center of villages, sleeping in his van, setting up placards describing Gandhi, talking to whoever walked by” (Pal, 184). In 1984, he wrote an essay describing “120 nonviolent ways to resist the Israelis” which he borrowed nearly verbatim from Sharp’s 198 nonviolent methods in his book The Politics of Nonviolent Action. In the following year he founded the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence, which he used to distribute pamphlets and translations of works by Gandhi, King, and Sharp.

Awad bears many similarities to Mahatma Gandhi and personally maintains the key characteristics previously discussed (i.e. a spiritual foundation, a perceived divinity in all human beings, conversion through moral influence, and the maintenance of equally pure means and ends). However, his nonviolent approach in the First Intifada seems to suggest an approach with one foot in principled pacifism and the other in pragmatic activism.

#### *Awad the Principled:*

After a sniper killed his father, Awad’s mother was forced to place her children into foster care, though she remained in close contact with her children, and “instilled in

them values of forgiveness and compassion” (Pal, 183). As a child, Awad recalls the impression left on him by Quaker and Mennonite missionaries who visited the Palestinian Territories and “helped just because people [were] in trouble and in need” (Ingram, 44). Awad began to demonstrate pacifist qualities early during his education at St. George’s in Jerusalem where he “first got arrested at the age of twelve for protesting Jordanian rule and subsequently got into trouble for questioning the finances of the Greek Orthodox Church and for refusing to carry a gun during the school’s military training” (Pal, 183). In 1959, he received a scholarship to Lee College in Tennessee, but soon returned to Palestine after becoming “disillusioned with the way African Americans were treated”. For ten years, he “taught at a Mennonite school... before returning to the United States to study at Bluffton College in Ohio” (Pal, 183). The U.S. at this time was “divided over Vietnam, and Awad became increasingly influenced by [the] pacifist principles” of Gandhi, King, and his Bluffton mentor (and fellow Mennonite) Elmer Neufield, who “impressed on him the notion of the divine in every man” (Pal, 183). He returned to Palestine in 1983 and immediately began writing and distributing materials explaining the benefits of nonviolence and “arguing for the Palestinians to use nonviolence to resist occupation” (Pal, 183). In 1985, he founded the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence.

In 1989, Awad was interviewed by author and journalist Catherine Ingram for her book In the Footsteps of Gandhi: Conversations with Spiritual Social Activists. In this interview Awad described in detail his personal nonviolence philosophy. Awad’s Christian Mennonite faith, though representing a different source, does bear some resemblance to Gandhi’s spiritual nonviolence:



What affects me most as a Christian is the idea of forgiveness and the idea to help others. The thing that I learned about spirituality is there is a part of God in everyone; this is a Quaker concept, which I feel strongly. I used to think, 'How could there be a part of God in someone I didn't like, someone who had done wrong, or even in myself when I am angry? Where is God in me when I need him most?' But then I would learn that there is God in everybody. (Awad, Ingram, 44)

From this quote it appears that Awad has religious foundations for his principled activism. And like Gandhi, this foundation fosters a perception of the divine in all of humanity, even in those "who had done wrong". Maintaining the principled trajectory of this line of thought, Awad upholds the necessity of forgiveness.

We have to make a distinction between a fellow and his actions. There is no bad individual; there is no bad boy or bad girl, it is their actions that may be bad. Some people have more problems than others, so we work with the problem rather than say to the person, 'You are a liar,' or 'You are a thief'. Instead we say, 'You have a problem of lying,' or 'You have a problem of stealing'. (Awad, Ingram, 45)

Here Awad seems to demonstrate the view of struggle as a dialogue or collaboration rather than an "us" versus "them" conflict. This dialogue involves conversion of the opponent using moral influence:

Non-violent struggle achieves its goals and effect upon the hearts and minds of Israeli soldiers. It can manifest itself in a higher rate of Israeli emigration [from the Occupied Territories], by a loss of fighting spirit for the Israeli soldier, by their complaints and protest against the actions of the Israeli government. (Awad, 26)

This is the personal philosophy professed by Mubarak Awad when he was forty-six. When one looks back at his writings and actions as a political activist leader before and during the Intifada, however, one does not easily see a principled disposition. Rather, he seems to have purposely cultivated a pragmatic veneer. This is evident in his 1984 publication "Non-violent Resistance: A Strategy for the Occupied Territories".



*Awad the Pragmatic:*

Awad's "Non-Violent Resistance: A Strategy for the Occupied Territories" was first published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* in 1984, and was translated into Arabic to educate Palestinians on nonviolent tactics. The piece has three parts: first, Awad reviews the conditions imposed on Palestinians by Israeli occupation. Second, he explains why nonviolence is the most effective strategy for resisting the occupation. Third, he describes in detail the most important nonviolent tactics and methods as they could be utilized by Palestinians. In this work, Awad draws heavily from the writings of Sharp to explain and promote the use of nonviolence as a tactic for political gain. And like Sharp's work, it contains no mention of Gandhi or his spiritual approach to nonviolence:

This study aims to discuss the issue of non-violence as a serious and comprehensive strategy for resisting the Israeli occupation, and the means and tactical methods to implement this strategy as well as the problems and obstacles which it would face in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. (Awad, 23)

It seems Awad set aside his principled pacifism in his quest to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine. This is evident in regard to his departure from Gandhi's insistence on pure means:

For the Palestinians who are living in the West Bank and Gaza during this period, the most effective strategy is one of non-violence. This does not determine the methods open to Palestinians on the outside [i.e. outside the Occupied Territories]; nor does it constitute a rejection of the concept of armed struggle. It does not rule out the possibility that the struggle on the inside [in the Occupied Territories] may turn into an armed struggle at a later stage. Simply put, the thesis is that during this particular historical period, and with regard only to the 1.3 million Palestinians living under the Israeli occupation, non-violence is the most effective method to obstruct the policy of 'Judaization'. (Awad, 24)

Also like Sharp, Awad's primary requirement for means and tactics is that they are effective and in keeping with the political goals of the movement:

If obstruction occurs violently (such as by throwing stones), the reaction of the authorities will also be violent and the authorities will find a ready excuse to redouble its efforts. New forces will be called in under the pretense of 'protecting' the innocent civilian from troublemakers and attackers. If the obstruction occurs in a non-violent fashion, and the obstructers openly declare that they do not wish to injure them and their interests, then ... the situation will be entirely different. The [nonviolent] message will be very clear to the Israelis. They cannot, in such a case, accuse anyone of anti-Semitism or hatred for Jews. Neither will they be able to use the excuse of 'terrorism'. Instead, these self-sacrifices will achieve their maximum effect. (Awad, 29)

In shifting from a principled to a strategic basis for his action, Awad signaled his willingness to forsake the ideal of nonviolence should violence prove more successful, though, *in fact*, he neither participated in nor sanctioned even the limited violence of stone-throwing during the Intifada. I would argue that the contextual factors behind his decision to modify his stance have a bearing on his reputation as a legitimate nonviolent leader. Awad realized the potential limitations of principled nonviolence on an immediate large scale:

I am one of those people who remind the Palestinians that the Israeli is a human being. And we must see them, as well as ourselves, as human beings. The more you destroy another human being, the more you destroy yourself. There are hopeful signs... But I don't think we are even close to calling the Israelis friends yet. There is still so much hatred, so much sadness, so much killing. (Awad, Ingram, 56)

Awad recognized the deeply embedded barriers that prevent Palestinians from quickly accepting a forgiving view of Israelis. A century of hatred and dehumanization stands in the way of this Gandhian principle. So in the words of Gandhi, he concluded that it would be impractical to wait for every activist to "recognize the capability of the spiritual life in the political world" and he likewise affirmed that if Palestine "takes up noncooperation out of her weakness... it must still serve the same purpose, namely

bring her delivery from the crushing weight of... injustice, if a sufficient number of people practice it" (Gandhi, 88).

Unlike Gandhi, Awad did not merely acknowledge the existence of pragmatic activism as a permissible (though less desirable) stance. Rather he made it part of his platform. He adopted the pragmatic rhetoric and weaved it together with his long-term principled vision, perhaps hoping that the former could lead to the latter:

Now if there have been any victories in this, and in the Palestinian struggle I think there have been, it will help any nonviolent struggle around the world. They will start looking at the Palestinian case and they will see that after using armed struggle for forty years, the Palestinians have realized that they are able to use nonviolent struggle, and they have been achieving something with it. So another reason that I hope that the Palestinians [triumph] is so that others will look at them and say, 'We can do it this way too'. The similarity in the mentality of people is always there. As much as you want to struggle, you don't want to be killed. And if you don't want to be killed, you also have to make it clear that you don't want to kill. This is the beauty of nonviolence. (Awad, Ingram, 47)

It is my hope that if nonviolence works, this idea would not only be a strategy with the Palestinians against the Israelis, it will move inside the Palestinians so that a teacher would not hit a student, or a parent would not hit a child. The idea would be to use this training as part of our community, as part of our daily life to be nonviolent. But this will take time. (Awad, Ingram, 49)

What I see in these texts is a man who combines a principled philosophy with pragmatic action with the hope that the power of nonviolence will in fact support the continued and expanding commitment to nonviolence. And this combination is no accident. In another interview, one in 1988, Awad was asked by David Bedein of the Centre of Near East Policy and Research "how his approach differed from the pure approach of non-violence advocated by King and Gandhi". Awad replied that his nonviolent action was "more pragmatic than they were" (Spivak, 2012).

As Weber states, “how much weight is placed on which considerations depends on the value system of the nonviolent activist” and activists with a “seeming need to get things done here and now, to achieve immediate political goals, point to a preference for the older Sharp over Sharp the young Gandhian” (Weber, 264). Awad is one such Palestinian activist who felt the need to act before waiting for the barriers to Gandhian-like forgiveness to be overcome. But as we see in his interviews, Awad retains a personal principled nature. This synthesis of approaches and the success it had in the first years of the Intifada seem to suggest that principled and pragmatic forms of nonviolence are not necessarily incompatible. This may be especially so when activists have a capacity to foresee the limits of violence in a given context, and thereby *strategically* choose a path of nonviolence that, for Gandhi, arose from inner conviction. Indeed, when combined in a thoughtful and effective way, it may be possible to modify Gandhi’s traditional nonviolent approach to meet contextual on-the-ground needs. It is this Awad-style combination that I predict could be the appropriate synthesis Palestine requires.

#### Looking Ahead:

I want to return for a moment to the New York Times piece by journalist Nicholas Kristof on an incident of stone-throwing that was quoted at the beginning of this paper. The outcome of the rally described by Kristof seems to be in direct conflict with the peaceful mood with which the scene began. Whether the youths throwing the stones had violent intentions or not, it is obvious that their actions negatively affected the goals of the nonviolent protest. This is a prime example of a failed attempt to adapt nonviolent



campaigns to the relevant cultural contexts and of the detrimental effect on the overall cause. Such an occurrence in 2010 underscores the need for an effective response to the conditions that facilitate a culture of stone-throwing. To that end, it is imperative that there are effective educational resources and clear consistent tactical instructions from leaders. Meeting these two criteria will help maintain steadfastness in the face of Israeli military retribution, which largely destroyed Palestinian nonviolent resolve in the early 1990s.

In this paper, I have presented the nonviolence philosophies of the principled Mahatma Gandhi, the pragmatic Gene Sharp, and their mutual disciple, the principled pragmatic Mubarak Awad. Despite their diverse approaches to nonviolence, each of these three men denounced stone-throwing. Gandhi did so primarily because it is an act of anger incompatible with his principled forgiveness and value of human divinity. Gene Sharp did so because it is not a means that serves the political goals of Palestinians. Awad has inherited both of these viewpoints.

If, for whatever reason, Palestinians are not yet willing fully to embrace, or capable of fully adopting, Gandhian principled nonviolence, that does not completely exclude any use of principled pacifism when it can be supplemented by pragmatic nonviolence. But the First Intifada demonstrated that principled and pragmatic forms of nonviolence can coexist only if structured appropriately. I see evidence for this in the philosophy and actions of Mubarak Awad, who perceived an immediate need in Palestine for the benefits of nonviolent resistance.

The relationship between principled and pragmatic nonviolence can become problematic when the outcomes of the two approaches do not match, and specifically

when a contextually based, pragmatic assessment devolves into legitimizing acts of violence rather than affirming the merits of acting nonviolently. But if a nonviolent movement is led by activists that understand principled nonviolence and can hold their pragmatic tactics to those principled standards, then it may be possible to navigate the movement in a way that best suits Palestine's contextual demands.

Though I would be optimistic if such an approach was put to use today, I do think it important to provide one critique. A Sharp-esque leader may be able to utilize pragmatic activism, unfettered by the values expressed in principled nonviolence, to achieve gains for the Palestinian struggle. However, the past generations of repression, violence, and anger (and their likely continuation without a new approach) lead me to believe that a stable relationship between Palestinians and Israelis requires an adoption of Gandhi's philosophy of forgiveness and his value of all human life.

As peace studies scholar Thomas Weber notes, "Anyone undertaking to [pursue] nonviolent action necessarily stands on the shoulders of Gene Sharp. In the same way, Sharp necessarily stood on the shoulders of Mohandas Gandhi... Perhaps standing on shoulders merely enlarges the field of view indicating a greater variety of paths available to the traveler who does not want to use violence" (Weber, 264-5). I pose this response to Weber: Awad could be interpreted as that traveler. The question now is whether the Palestinians can stand on his shoulders.

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